

Plot Hatching Related

NEW ORLEANS, La. (AP)—Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's "confidential informant" told a 3-judge criminal district court panel Tuesday he heard Lee Harvey Oswald, Clay Shaw and David Ferrie plotting to assassinate President John F. Kennedy.

Perry Raymond Russo, 23, an insurance salesman from Baton Rouge, testified he was in Ferrie's apartment here in September

Nagging little question,
Page 12A.

ber 1963 and listened to a discussion of how to kill Kennedy and make a getaway.

Russo said the plot involved "triangulation of crossfire," diversionary shooting, a possible flight to Cuba and the sacrificing of one man as a scapegoat to allow the others to escape.

Kennedy was killed in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963—two months after the alleged meeting in Ferrie's cluttered apartment not far from New Orleans' elegant Garden District.

THE WARREN COMMISSION said that Oswald was the lone assassin and that there was no credible evidence of any conspiracy.

Of the three alleged conspirators, only Shaw is alive. Oswald was killed by Jack Ruby two days after the assassination, and Ferrie died in bed Feb. 22.

Shaw has denied taking part in any conspiracy to kill the President, and the attorney general in Washington said the FBI investigated Shaw late in 1963 and cleared him of any link to the assassination.

Russo, a part-time college student who lives with a younger cousin near the campus of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, was described as "a nice young kid" by a neighbor. A fellow student at LSU said he was "a quiet type who is interested in politics."

Russo was first publicly connected with the Garrison probe on Feb. 24, when he told reporters he knew Ferrie.

Under the questioning by Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison, Russo said Oswald was introduced

to him as "Leon Oswald" and Shaw as "Clem Bertrand."

Shown a photograph by Garrison, Russo identified Leon as Lee Harvey Oswald—the man the Warren Commission named as the assassin.

Asked if Clem Bertrand was in the courtroom, Russo pointed at Shaw.

The 54-year-old Shaw, calmly smoking a cigarette, didn't move.

RUSO SAID he first saw Lee Harvey Oswald in Ferrie's apartment, and that Oswald was "wiping or cleaning a rifle, bolt action. It had a sight on it for hunting."

Russo said he had seen Bertrand in May, 1962, when President Kennedy dedicated a new wharf in New Orleans, and said "New Orleans must trade or fade."

"I was in school," Russo said. "The President was coming down to make a speech. At that time I saw Bertrand. While the President was speaking, I was looking around. Bertrand was one of the few not looking at the President."

Police estimated 20,000 persons attended the dedication.

Russo said that after he contacted Garrison following Ferrie's death, the district attorney took him to "a house on Dauphine Street." Shaw lives at 1213 Dauphine St. "He stuck his head out the door, and I said, 'that's the man,'" Russo said, referring to Bertrand.

The hearing recessed at 3:30 p.m. until

10 a.m., Wednesday. The defense issued subpoenas for Russo's school and employment records.

The rare 3-judge criminal district court panel was called to hear the preliminary case and decide whether there is enough evidence to warrant formal charge and trial for Shaw, now retired.

SHAW WAS ARRESTED in Garrison's office on March 1. He was booked—but never formally charged—with conspiring to kill the President. Such procedure is common under Louisiana law.

Shaw, onetime Army major, was freed on \$10,000 bond shortly after his arrest.

Ferrie, a former airline pilot, was found dead in his bed Feb. 22. The coroner ruled death resulted from natural causes.

After leading Russo through a brief summary of his educational background and present job, Garrison asked if he knew Ferrie.

Russo said he not only knew Ferrie but had an "open book invitation" to visit Ferrie's apartment at any time.

He said that it was in the summer of 1963 that Ferrie "indicated to me that he was obsessed with Kennedy." This drew an immediate objection as being a conclusion reached by the witness. The court sustained the objection.

"Don't tell us your conclusions," resumed Garrison. "What did Ferrie say to you in regard to Kennedy?"

This drew a new objection, also sustained.



DMN 3-15-67

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Assassination Probe

Big Little Question Unanswered

By THOMAS K. HARVEY
NEW ORLEANS (UPI) — One of the biggest little unanswered questions in Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's probe of an alleged New Orleans conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy is just one word long and remains unanswered.

The question is: why?

Here are the facts:

Clay L. Shaw, a 54-year-old New Orleanian of considerable stature, culture and intelligence, is accused of conspiring to murder Kennedy.

PERRY R. RUSSO, a 35-year-old Baton Rouge, La., insurance salesman says Shaw, whom he said he knew as "Clem Bertrand," plotted with assassin Lee Harvey Oswald and the late David W. Ferrie to kill Kennedy.

Shaw, an open admirer of John F. Kennedy, was managing director of the International Trade Mart here at the time of Kennedy's assassination. In his job as director, Shaw personally, and the Trade Mart had everything to gain from Kennedy's continued existence.

Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, if nothing else, had opened new vistas for the Trade Mart. But there were other Kennedy inroads into Latin America, too.

The big little question begs even more when applied to Russo.

Why did Russo wait nearly three and one-half years to come forward with his information?

Why did Russo not come forward when Ferrie's name was linked with Garrison's assassination investigation as early as Feb. 17?

Why did Russo wait eight days —until after Ferrie died of a brain hemorrhage in his New Orleans apartment — to volunteer his story?

WHY DID RUSSO not report immediately after the assassination to the FBI, the Secret Service or others participating in the Warren Commission investigation of the assassination.

There is no record that he either offered information or was questioned.

The same question goes unanswered with respect to Raymon Cummings and Clyde Limbaugh. Cummings, a former Dallas cab driver, told Garrison he drove Ferrie and Oswald to Jack Ruby's night club prior to the assassination. Everyone knows who Ruby was—the killer of Oswald.

Limbaugh, who describes himself as a singer, said he was working for Ruby and saw Ruby, Oswald and J. D. Tippett—the policeman slain by Oswald after the assassination — together in Ruby's office a week before the assassination.

Why did Cummings and Limbaugh wait until now to come forward?

Limbaugh said in a telephone interview he did not think the information important at the time of the assassination.

Why is it important now?

Russo Says He Heard Of Oswald in Telecast

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Perry Russo, the "confidential informant" in Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's probe of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, told a television interviewer he had never heard of Lee Harvey Oswald until he was linked with the presidential assassination.

WDSU-TV, of New Orleans broadcast an interview Tuesday night it made with Russo shortly after the death of David Ferrie two weeks ago. Garrison described Ferrie as a central figure in the assassination probe.

"I never heard of Oswald until on television (until) the assassination," Russo said in the interview. He said Ferrie never mentioned Oswald's name.

Russo, a 35-year-old insurance salesman now living in Baton Rouge, told a three-judge state court earlier Tuesday that he heard Lee Harvey Oswald, Clay Shaw and David Ferrie plotting to assassinate President Kennedy.

Russo also said in the interview that "Ferrie was obsessed with Kennedy and the idea of what he was doing to Cuba or Castro."

"Quite frequently he (Ferrie) talked in general terms and not specifically about Kennedy though about how easy it would be to assassinate a President of the United States because of the fact that he was in the public view so much and unprotected more or less and there were so many people—the availability of exit and the fact that he (Ferrie) could fly a plane to get out of the country. And he (Ferrie) jokingly posed the

question that if he and I could do it . . . it could be done," Russo said in the interview.

His testimony came at a preliminary hearing where Garrison must show probable cause why he should be allowed to proceed with a trial against Shaw, 54-year-old retired International Trade Mart executive.

Garrison arrested Shaw and booked him with conspiracy to commit murder.

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3-15-67

3-15-67 5

2965-86